



News Release

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Locust Fire update: June 27, 2015

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Fredonia, Ariz., June 27, 2015 – When the Locust Fire was first discovered on June 15, fire managers met to discuss plans to manage the fire for the benefit of forest health and determined a planning area boundary that would be limited to 3,282 acres in size.

Today, the lightning-caused Locust Fire on the North Kaibab Ranger District near Fredonia, Ariz., reached 2,160 acres, resulting in improved overall forest health, wildlife habitat and community safety in an area that was deemed safe for firefighters to manage wildfire in a forest type identified by the Kaibab National Forest Land and Resources Management Plan as appropriate for management actions.

“We are extremely pleased with the progress of the Locust Fire and the resource objectives that were accomplished to date, including managing this fire in a safe and effective manner in which every firefighter returned home safely,” said North Zone Fire Management Officer Ed Hiatt. “By allowing fire to play its natural role in the forest, we are able to actively build resiliency, improve forest health and help reduce the risk of future high-severity fire in the area.”

Based on a 4-year average, the North Kaibab Ranger District has about 80 lightning-caused fires annually.

“When conditions are right, it is always nice to know that the community understands why we do what we do,” said North Kaibab District Ranger Randall Walker. “When we have the opportunity to make a significant and positive impact in the management of the Kaibab Plateau landscape, it is always good to know that we have positive community support, and today we are pleased with the results our firefighters have achieved over the last 12 days.

Management of the fire is expected to transition from the current Type 3 Team under command of Incident Commander James Pettit, Williams Ranger District Fire Management Officer, Kaibab National Forest, to a Type 4 Team under the command of Incident Commander Justin Perkins on Tuesday. Over the coming days, the local Type 4 Team will continue to monitor and patrol the area while the majority of resource support will start to demobilize and return to their home units.

Forest managers would like to remind the general public that the Rainbow Rim remains open for recreational use. However, the roads within the Locust Fire planning area boundary remain barricaded and motorists are asked not to enter this 3,282-acre area until further notice. The Locust Fire planning area is bounded by Forest Service Road (FSR) 214 on the north, FSR 206 on the east, FSR 293 on the south and FSR 250 on the west.

This will be the final daily update for the Locust Fire.

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